





and foreign officers and seamen from the

now that the Governor of the Straits Settlements, acting evidently under instructions from the Colonial Office, adopts the plan of suggesting to the firms interested in shipping that they should strive to come to an understanding to put a stop to Sunday labour as the *rule*, this action is as condemned as useless and utterly hopeless. Because under certain circumstances work must be performed on Sunday, the oft-repeated cry 'where can the line be drawn?' is raised. Where, indeed, can the line be drawn? It is possible, in any case, to draw a sharp dividing line of what is right and what is wrong. Between honesty

wavering and crooked, so that it is often hard to say whether a certain course of conduct that lies near the frontier is on the

come to such a matter as Sunday rest, a custom or observance restricted to a relatively small section of the human family and variously regarded by the members of that family, the dividing line is still more uncertain. But, in spite of all the uncertainties, it is relatively easy thing to determine what is meant by making observance a rule and neglect the exception. In England, and even in Sabbatarian Scotland there is a good deal of Sunday labour. In certain spheres the amount is decreasing, and in others it is increasing. But these fluctuations do not prevent the Englishmen

between labour as the rule and labour as the exception ; and we do not believe there

We do not need to deny that there are many difficulties in the way of obtaining a cessation of Sunday labour 'as the rule' in ports such as Singapore, and Hongkong and we are inclined, along with our contemporary, to doubt if Sir Cecil Smith's advice to the shipping firms will have much good effect. The race for the dollar is keen and so all engrossing in these parts that distant and durable effects are overlooked in the desire to realise the immediate gains of the moment. The foreign

merchants of many different nationalities the hope of united action is not very strong.

The case, however, cited by our contemporary—that of a ship captain who was forced to work on Sunday because he was given to understand that if he did not the

utter hopelessness of united action but of isolated individual action, for there was no attempt made at combination.

porary hints that the end might be secured by combination among the workers. We fear, however, that if such were attempted the opponents of Sunday rest would soon discover that this effort was as hopeless as the others, that the likelihood of Englishmen, Germans, Dutchmen, Italians and men of all nationalities under the sun, with no opportunities of meeting together, or of obtaining concerted action with a view of gaining Sunday rest, is as small as the

ceivable. And if they obtained it, would not the old objection about the competition of junks and the difficulty of dealing with mail steamers reappear? Voluntary action

certainly be the best way of settling the

munity it is impracticable, and the only possible way of obtaining Sunday rest, *under the rule*, for clerks on shore and sailors on board ship, is for the Government to pass a law making the practice in Hongkong conform to that which prevails at the Treaty ports in China and at every British port where there is a custom house. That this can be easily done we have already demonstrated. The only valid objection

mail steamers, As the French and German mail boats never arrive on Sunday and the English boats rarely come in on Sunday forenoon, the delay would be insignificant. Besides, when the English mail does come in on Sunday, she is so far ahead of her time that an hour or two's delay is of little consequence. Just the other week we had an instance of an

English mail steamer slowing down on the voyage so as to arrive on Monday morn-

the might easily have been here on Sunday forenoon. We are therefore persuaded that the difficulty in dealing with mail steamers, which at the most is very small, could be easily got over, and Sunday trade made the rule in Hongkong as it is in nearly every other British port and even in the open ports of Heathen China.

**TELEGRAM**

(From Singapore papers.)

**TURKEY AND THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE**

London, August 20.—Efforts are being made to induce Turkey to join the Triple Alliance. Russia opposes the step.

**THE BRITISH GULF SEA DISPUTE**

The British Government has expressed the wish to suspend operations, the late pretences of sailing north.







